Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000
Public Law 106-393

Title II Project Submission Form

Northeast Oregon Forests Resource Advisory Committee

1. Project Number (Assigned by Designated Federal Official): **GR-MAL04-107**

2. Project Name: Aspen Surveys by Subwatershed	**3. County:** Grant
4. Project Sponsor: Blue Mountain Ranger District	**5. Date:** 11/04/2002
6. Sponsor's Phone Number: Michael Montgomery, District Ranger 541-575-3401	
7. Sponsors E-mail: mmontgomery02@fs.fed.us (project contact: Michael Tatum 541-575-3430)	

8. Project Location (attach project area map)	
a. 4th Field Watershed Name and HUC #: Upper John Day 17070201 and Silvies 17120002	
b. 5th Field Watershed Name and HUC # (if known): Priority Subwatersheds include portions of Jack Creek #60507, Snow Creek #60509, Wickiup Creek#60513, and Keller Creek #60515, all impacted by the Flagtail Fire, Summer 2002. Because of the fire, some of this work may be accomplished in 2003, with the Canyon Creek Watersheds being prioritized for 2004: Fawn #10815, Sugarloaf #10813 and portions of the Vance #10817, Middle Fork Canyon Creek #10809 and Canyon Meadows # 10811 sub-watersheds. Additional subwatersheds will be prioritized for the remaining fiscal years.	
c. Location: Township _ Range __ Section(s) _____ Township _ Range _ Section(s) _____	
d. BLM District	e. BLM Resource Area
f. National Forest: Malheur National Forest	g. Forest Service District: Blue Mountain Ranger District
h. State / Private / Other lands involved? ☐ Yes X No	

9. Statement of Project Goals and Objectives: (max. 7 lines)
Systematically inventory the Forest's rapidly declining aspen stands leading to future treatments to restore their health and vigor for the enjoyment of the public, increased availability and use by wildlife, and for their important role in providing biological diversity in our forested landscapes. Objectives are to: (1) utilize summer and permanent employees to conduct field surveys to locate, map (GPS), photograph and inventory aspen sites, noting condition of mature trees, presence or absence of regeneration, encroachment by conifers, browse damage, and use by wildlife. (2) prepare treatment plans for each site which can be incorporated into planning projects to meet NEPA requirements.

10. Project Description: (max. 30 lines.)

This project will allow us to systematically survey the district by sub-watershed to locate and map our existing stands and note current condition. Remaining aspen sites are very small and difficult to find; for each year's 20,000 acres of subwatershed surveyed, it is expected that approximately 40 aspen sites (typically each less than 1 acre) will be located and inventoried. This information will allow us to prioritize treatment of these remaining stands that we are likely to lose without some intervention. Aspen stands are unique habitat within the forested landscape and provide essential nesting and foraging areas for songbirds, woodpeckers, owls, some species of bats, and a variety of rodents and other small mammals. When plentiful, these stands provide important late fall and early spring forage for deer and elk. Unfortunately many of our stands currently lack vigor and may only consist of a few dying trees. Aspen trees are either male or female and stands in the Blue Mountains are entirely clonal in nature, that is, each site consists of a single genetic individual (mostly male). This prevents any regeneration from seed and results in the only viable regeneration method being sprouts from living individuals. While most clones continue to generate suckers, they are heavily grazed by elk, deer, and cattle, sapping the stored resources of the clone and preventing recruitment of any younger trees. Lack of fire has resulted in conifer encroachment of some stands, shading out sunlight and warmth necessary to promote suckering, and competing with mature trees for water and nutrients. These conifers normally range in size from 3 to 21"+ and need to be eliminated to reduce this competition. Some of the larger conifers will be girdled to provide snags and some may be removed. Where commercial activity is allowed these conifers may be incorporated into timber sale activities. By performing these inventories and treatments plans ahead of larger planning projects, inventory information can be incorporated into these larger environmental planning documents and facilitate future implementation. The three most likely treatments needed for aspen recovery include: conifer removal, burning, and fencing. Some site treatments not needing conifer removal or burning may proceed on a more rapid restoration timeline (Categorical Exclusion) than the normal Environmental Assessment of Environmental Impact Statement process. Information collected from aspen surveys would be incorporated into the District GIS system and formal silvicultural prescriptions would be prepared for sites needing treatment, site inventory forms would be prepared for each site located. Permanent employees who may prepare final treatment plans include the District Botanist or Biological Technician, and final silvicultural prescriptions would be prepared (a forest service requirement) by the Ecosystem Staff Ecologist (also a Certified Silviculturist).

11. Coordination of this project with other related project(s) on adjacent lands?

x Yes No **If yes, then describe** (max. 10 lines) Results will be incorporated into upcoming projects. Bryan Nelson of the Oregon Department of Forestry will contact adjacent landowners to investigate their willingness to participate in surveys and treatment plan preparation on private land.

12. How does proposed project meet purposes of the Legislation? [Sec. 203(b)(1)]

☐ Improves maintenance of existing infrastructure. [Sec. 2(b)]

X Implements stewardship objectives that enhance forest ecosystems. [Sec. 2(b)]

X Restores and improves land health. [Sec. 2(b)]

X Restores water quality. [Sec. 2(b)]

13. Project Type (check one) [Sec. 203(b)(1)]

☐ Road Maintenance [Sec. 2(b)(2)(A)]	☐ Trail Maintenance [Sec. 2(b)(2)(A)]
☐ Road Decommission/Obliteration [Sec. 2(b)(2)(A)]	☐ Trail Obliteration [Sec. 2(b)(2)(A)]
☐ Other Infrastructure Maintenance (specify): [Sec. 2(b)(2)(A)]	
☐ Soil Productivity Improvement [Sec. 2(b)(2)(B)]	☐ Forest Health Improvement [Sec. 2(b)(2)(C)]
☐ Watershed Restoration & Mntc. [Sec. 2(b)(2)(D)]	☐ Wildlife Habitat Restoration [Sec. 2(b)(2)(E)]
☐ Fish Habitat Restoration [Sec. 2(b)(2)(E)]	☐ Control of Noxious Weeds [Sec. 2(b)(2)(F)]
X Reestablish Native Species [Sec. 2(b)(2)(G)] Aspen	
Other Project Type (specify) [Sec. 2(b)(2)]:	

14. Measure of Project Accomplishments/Expected Outcomes [Sec. 203(b)(5)]	
a. Total Acres: survey 20,000 acres annually (100,000 acres total over 5 years)	b. Total Miles:
c. No. Structures:	d. Est. People Reached (for environmental education projects):
e. No. Laborer Days: 120	
f. Other (specify):	

15. Estimated Completion Date: [Sec. 203(b)(2)] by September 30 each fiscal year

16. Target Species Benefited: (if applicable) (max. 7 lines) Aspen stands provide essential nesting and foraging areas for songbirds, woodpeckers, owls, some species of bats, and a variety of rodents and other small mammals, as well as important late fall and early spring forage for deer and elk. They are often associated with riparian areas, and are part of a complex community of plant species. The bogs and seeps associated with aspen sites are important water storage areas.

17. How will cooperative relationships among people that use federal lands be improved? [Sec. 2(b)(3)] (max. 12 lines)
A majority of aspen stands on the Malheur National Forest are in extremely poor condition and will not survive the next decade due to declining age of mature sprouts and the lack of successful sprouting. These stands are extremely important to many bird and wildlife species. Loss of this habitat impacts these species directly, creating a chain reaction in a system that relies on "all the parts" to remain resilient and healthy. Aspen stands and associated meadows are also sought out by forest visitors as places to picnic, camp, hunt or just nature watch during the summer, and especially when fall color appears after the first frost.

18. How is this project in the best public interest? [Sec. 203(b)(7)] **Identify benefits to communities.** (max. 12 lines)
Aspen stands provide unique foraging and nesting habitat for big game and bird species, as well as recreation opportunities for forest visitors. These surveys, and the resulting restoration projects generated from the information collected, will provide employment opportunities for the local community and potentially generate small timber removal opportunities on a site specific basis.

19. How does project benefit federal lands/resources? (max. 12 lines)

Inventory does not require NEPA process; projects resulting from inventory would require NEPA compliance. This question pertains to projects implemented on non-federal lands. See instructions.

20. Status of Project Planning			
a. NEPA Complete:	X Yes	☐ No	
If no, give est. date of completion:			
c. NMFS Sec. 7 ESA Consultation Complete:	X Yes	☐ No	
d. USFWS Sec. 7 ESA Consultation Complete:	X Yes	☐ No	
e. Survey & Manage Complete:	☐ Yes	☐ No	X Not Applicable
f. DSL/ODFW* Permits for In-stream Work Obtained:	☐ Yes	☐ No	X Not Applicable
g. DSL/COE* 404 Fill/Removal Permit Obtained:	☐ Yes	☐ No	X Not Applicable
h. SHPO* Concurrence Received:	☐ Yes	☐ No	X Not Applicable
i. Project Design(s) Completed:	☐ Yes	☐ No	X Not Applicable
***** DSL = Dept. of State Lands, ODFW = Oregon Dept.of Fish and Wildlife, COE = Army Corps of Engineers, SHPO = State Historic Preservation Officer			

21. Proposed Method(s) of Accomplishment *(check those that apply)*	
☐ Contract	X Federal Workforce (30 days)
☐ County Workforce	☐ Volunteers
X Other (specify): summer temporary workforce (local hiring, 60 laborer days)	

22. Will the Project Generate Merchantable Materials? [Sec. 204(e)(3)]

☐ Yes X No However, projects based on this information may generate merchantable material ranging in size from pole to sawlog material since conifer removal will be necessary to restore some aspen stands.

23. Anticipated Project Costs [Sec. 203(b)(3)]	
a. Total County Title II Funds Requested: $19,811.00 The acres provided in section (14. a) represent approximately two sub-watersheds. Our intent is to survey two sub-watersheds per year totaling approximately 20,000 acres, depending topography, access, number and complexity of the aspen stands located, for a total of approximately 100,000 acres of the district surveyed over the five year period.	
b. Is this a multi-year funding request? X Yes ☐ No If yes, then display by fiscal year	
c. FY02 Request: $	f. FY05 Request: $20,604.00
d. FY03 Request: $18,317.00	g. FY06 Request: $21,428.00
e. FY04 Request: $19,811.00	

Table 1. Project Cost Analysis:

Item	*Column A* **Fed. Agency Appropriated Contribution [Sec. 203(b)(4)]**	*Column B* **Requested County Title II Contribution [Sec. 203(b)(4)]**	*Column C* **Other Contributions [Sec. 203(b)(4)]**	*Column D* **Total Available Funds**
24. Field Work & Site Surveys	$4250.00	$13000.00	$2000 (volunteers)	$19250.00
25. NEPA & Sec. 7 ESA Consultation				
26. Permit Acquisition				
27. Project Design & Engineering				
28. Contract Preparation				
29. Contract Administration				
30. Contract Cost				
31. Workforce Cost				
32. Materials & Supplies		$ 394.00		$394.00
33. Monitoring		$ 2700.00		$2700.00
34. Other (vehicle operating costs)	$750.00	$ 2250.00		$3000.00
35. Project Sub-Total	$5000.00	$18344.00	$2000	$25344.00
36. Indirect Costs (Overhead @ 8%) (per year for multi-year projects)	$1,310	$ 1,467.00		$2,777.00
37. Total Cost Estimate	$6,310.00	$19,811.00	$2,000	$28,121.00

38. Identify Source(s) of Other Funding for Project Identified Above [Sec. 203(b)(4)] (max. 7 lines)
Oregon Department of Forestry (Bryan Nelson) has been contacted and has agreed to participate in contacting adjacent landowners and owners of intermixed lands to inquire as to their interest in participating in the inventory and treatment plan development for aspen sites. A Professor of Biology at Portland State University has indicated his interest in participating in the project as a volunteer. The Oregon Native Plant Society has been contacted in an effort to seek volunteers interested in participating in the survey work.

39. Monitoring Plan [Sec. 203(b)(6)]

a. **What measures or evaluations will be made to determine how well the proposed project meets the desired ecological conditions?** [Sec. 203(b)(6)] (max. 7 lines)
Who is responsible for this monitoring item?:
The Blue Mountain Ranger District Botanist, Ecologist or Biological Technician will be responsible for monitoring the quality of aspen stand information gathered, as well as organizing and inputting data into a GIS aspen layer and database.

b. How will the project be evaluated to determine how well the proposed project contributes towards local employment and/or training opportunities, including summer youth jobs programs such as the Youth Conservation Corps? [Sec. 203(b)(6)] (max. 7 lines)

Who is responsible for this monitoring item ?:

The Blue Mountain Ranger District Ecosystem Department has traditionally hired summer crews to complete field projects. We have employed senior citizens, displaced mill workers, college students, and Youth Conservation Corps crews. A diversity of background, age, and experience provides a diversity of skills and knowledge we can draw upon to get the job done. The Blue Mountain District Biological Technician is responsible for crew hiring and tracking their time on this project.

c. What methods and measures of evaluation will be established to determine how well the proposed project improves the use of, or added value to, any products removed from National Forest System lands consistent with the purposes of this Act? [Sec. 203(b)(6) and Sec. 204(e)(3)] (max. 7 lines)

Who is responsible for this monitoring item?: not applicable

d. Identify total funding needed to carry out specified monitoring tasks (Table 1, Item 33) (max. 7 lines)

Amount $2700

Approximately 14 days ($2700.00) are allocated for crew hiring, coordinating crew work assignments, spot-checking data quality, organizing maps, filing photos, inputting data collected into GIS aspen layer and database, and preparing the initial or annual Title II proposals.

County Commissioner Concurrence

(Majority Required per charter)

A majority of the county commissioners of Grant County have reviewed this proposed Public Law 106-393 project for the Northeast Oregon Forests Advisory Council and agree with the proposal as submitted, except for the comments noted below:

_____ _____

Attested by Commissioner Date

Priority Rating:

X High ☐ Medium ☐ Low

Comments/Rational: